



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH J. TABORSK
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CHAIRMAN
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MEMBER
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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

March 5, 2012

H.B. 5372: An Act Concerning a Deaf Child Bill of Rights

Dear Chairman Fleischmann, Chairman Stillman, and Honorable Members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for raising H.B. 5357, An Act Concerning a Deaf Child Bill of Rights. I am in support of this bill because of the benefits and protections it will provide to the deaf children of Connecticut. Quite frankly, it's a matter of fairness.

Much of the discussion today about education reform has centered on the achievement gap. To that end, there is a large divide between kids that are hard of hearing and those that are not. Currently, between 71% and 81% of children who are deaf or hard of hearing fall short of their goals in CMT and CAPT assessments. Comparatively, the rates of kids without hearing difficulties that fall short of CMT and CAPT goals are 35%-58%, according to the 2011 Connecticut State Department of Education data for CMT and CAPT scores.

The Deaf Child Bill of Rights would go a long way toward addressing this well-documented problem. Specifically, it would require that IEPs for children with hearing disabilities include a Language and Communication Plan to address the individual needs of these children. If this legislation is passed, Connecticut will be closer to the standards outlined in the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the achievement gap suffered by hearing impaired or deaf children should be reduced.

In conclusion, I ask the committee to pass this bill to ensure that our children with hearing disabilities be given the same chance to succeed that their hearing peers have. Please have Connecticut join the eleven other states that have a Bill of Rights for Deaf Children. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe".

Joe Taborsak



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S.B. 305: An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Personal Financial Management in the Public School Curriculum

Dear Chairman Fleischmann, Chairman Stillman, and Honorable Members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for raising S.B. 305, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Personal Financial Management in the Public School Curriculum. I am in support of this bill because of the benefits the curriculum of financial responsibility would provide.


With defined pension plans almost extinct, employers cutting back on 401(k) matching, the percentage of American workers with little or no retirement savings continues to grow. These troubling conditions suggest that future Americans will have to rely much more upon their individual ability to effectively manage, save and invest their money, if they are to have a chance at a stable and decent retirement.

Many economists and analysts have suggested that a lack of public financial literacy played a significant role in the subprime mortgage crisis of 2007, the effects of which are still taking their toll. We have also sadly seen so many Americans in their fifties and sixties watch their retirement accounts suffer devastating, life changing losses, during the financial services meltdown of 2008. Many of these people suffered significant losses because they did not diversify their investments, a very basic rule of finance.

These sad events have exposed the glaring fact that we have to prepare the students of today better than past generations were prepared. In sum, we need to raise the bar on public financial literacy, and the only place to effectively do so is our public education system. I hope this is the year that we can make financial literacy a requirement of every student's high school education.

In conclusion, I respectfully ask the committee to support this bill to ensure that our children have the knowledge to effectively manage their money and assets. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Joe Taborsak